

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
TOURISM AND CULTURE
LOK SABHA**

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:4271

ANSWERED ON:18.05.2006

DEVELOPMENT AND CONSERVATION OF BUDDHIST CENTRES

Nikhil Kumar Shri

Will the Minister of TOURISM AND CULTURE be pleased to state:

- (a) whether UNESCO has agreed to provide funds for conservation of Bodhgaya, a world Buddhist centre;
- (b) if so, the details thereof ; and
- (c) the steps taken by the Government to develop and conserve Buddhist centres in the country?

Answer

MINISTER FOR TOURISM & CULTURE (SMT. AMBIKA SONI)

(a) No, Sir. UNESCO has not provided any fund for the conservation of Bodhgaya.

(b) Question does not arise.

(c) The Tourism Department is extending central financial assistance for development of tourism infrastructure for various Buddhist sites in the country and has spent Rs. 93.47 crores between 8th – 10th plan till date. In addition to the above, the Department of Tourism is also mobilizing external funding from Japan for development of infrastructure at major Buddhist sites and is coordinating with relevant ministries to improve and develop road, rail and air connectivity.

The Department of Culture is granting financial assistance for preservation and development of Buddhist art and culture in the country. It also extends budgetary support to Buddhist institutes and provide full funds for three autonomous central institutes at Leh, Sarnath and Nalanda which impart education in Buddhist religion and philosophy etc.

The centrally protected Buddhist sites in the country are maintained on a day to day basis and structural repairs of special nature are taken up as and when required. Preservation of structures and sculptures is also taken up besides environmental development to present the monuments in a befitting manner.